Indians in Ukraine Jails

2406. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Quest for life in the West ends in Baltic Jail" published in the 'Statesman' dated the 29th January 2003;

(b) if so, whether hundreds of Indian are languishing in Ukraine jails and if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have held discussions with the Government of Ukraine to get them released; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) As per the information available with the Embassy of India in Kyiv, 369 Indians are alleged to be under arrest in Ukraine as on 7 March 2003. Of these, 242 are alleged to have been issued passport by the Passport Office at Jallandhar, 121 by the Regional Passport Officer at Chandigarh, 2 each by the Passport Office at bareilly and New Delhi, and 1 each by the Regional Passport Office at Jammu and Kolkata.

(c) and (d) Whenever the Government of Ukraine informs the Embassy of India in Kyiv about the arrest of a person alleged to be an Indian citizen, the Embassy get in touch with the Government of Ukraine and collects the particulars of his identity. These are sent to the concerned Passport Office for verification. Once the identity of the arrestee is established, the Embassy gets in touch with the arrestee and begins the process of his repatriation to India as per the procedures provided under the Consular Manual of the Government of India.